

Curriculum Ideas Exploring

# Fire Safety



Cathy Abraham/2003



# Fire Safety



**Curriculum Goal** – To raise the awareness for children about ways in which they can stay safe, and empower them in the event of a fire or emergency.

## Vocabulary:

- Fire
- Extinguisher
- Fire alarm
- Emergency
- Exit/Escape
- Combustible
- Flame retardant
- Prevention
- Dalmatian
- Safe/Safety

**Letter of the Week:** F (Review)

**Colors of the Week:** Red, Yellow, Orange



## Concepts:

- Fires can hurt people and destroy all of our things.
- Fire(s) can be good by helping us cook and heating our homes, when under control, made on purpose and supervised.
- Fires are hot and dangerous.
- There are things you can do if there is a fire to stay safe.
- Only adults should use matches and lighters.
- Fire fighters are brave workers that put out fires and help us in an emergency.

## Sensory Table Ideas:

Place shredded red paper in the sensory table. (Paper from a paper shredder can provide a different kind of experience and texture.)

## Art Activities:

- Cut out the shape of a fire truck for at the easel *(as a choice)*
- Tie yellow, orange, black and red crayons together *(to color with as a "bundle")*
- Have children draw a "fire" picture. *Thin glue with water in a small container, add some red color. Children paint a thin layer of glue over the fire picture. Sprinkle on baking soda (over the "fire" to put it out)*
- Make "Rescue Dogs" *On an envelope, draw a face with pencil: eyes, nose, mouth, and tongue. Cut out 2 triangles, then glue on as "ears". Make thumbprints around the dogs face, as Dalmatian spots.*
- Children draw on sidewalk with red and yellow chalk. Let children put out "fires" with water bottles or the hose.



- Older children can draw fire prevention or safety posters. *Or Exit signs.*
- Squirt thick red and orange paint or fingerpaint onto paper. *Place a piece of plastic wrap over the picture. Children then “fingerpaint” and push paint around by running their fingers on the plastic wrap. Pull plastic wrap off quickly. This will cause paint to look like “fire”.*
- Marble paint with red, yellow, black &/or orange. *Roll marble in paint, then roll onto paper place in a box lid. Variation: Marble paint on a cut out of the shape of a house. Reassure children that everyone got out first.*
- Children trace/cut out red rectangles and black circles *to create “fire trucks”*
- Let children draw with charcoal. *Discuss origin and uses.*
- Make pretend “smoke detectors.” *Children staple 2 paper plates together. Glue a red circle or sticker in the center. Discuss purpose.*
- Sponge paint. *Use “leaf” shaped sponges, upside down. (resemble “flames”)*
- Blow paint with straws and thin red and yellow paint, blending on paper
- Paint with string or yarn (fire hoses)
- Add several yellow and orange highlighter markers to the Art Area.

#### **Cooking/Nutrition Experience:**

- Discuss how fire fighters need to be strong, and encourage children to drink their milk and eat healthy foods!
- Children can put together “fire trucks” with graham cracker sections and round cookies or crackers (wheels)

#### **Community Time:** (“Circle Time”/“Group Time”)

**Monday:** Take dictation from the children on a large sheet of paper, writing their responses to the question: *“What do we know about preventing fires?”* (Display chart)

**Tuesday:** Ask and discuss: *“What things can happen if children play with matches or lighters?”*

**Wednesday:** Ask and write responses to the question: *“Do you remember what words we know that begin with the letter “F”?”*

**Thursday:** Ask and discuss: *“What do you do if there is a fire?”*

**Friday:** Ask and discuss: *“What did we learn this week about what do in a fire and how to prevent fires?”* (Re-cap/concept reinforcement) Display answer chart.

*Follow with books, songs and fingerplays (included) related to the curriculum theme “Fire Safety.” Let the children know what their choices are for the morning and what activities are new in the classroom for the day. Review fire tips daily. Dismiss the group a few at a time in different, creative ways that reinforce concepts on fire safety.*

#### **Math Activities:**

- Learning about the numbers **9-1-1**. Have children circle or cut out 9’s and 1’s in magazines or advertisements, for number recognition.
- Dalmatian Dog Spot Counting (or matching) with different numbers of spots.
- Walk around the building and count exits, smoke alarms and fire extinguishers



### Home/School Connection Ideas:

- Ask parents to show their children how to get out of the house in an emergency, and which neighbors they should go to.
- Ask parents to check their smoke detector batteries!



### Science Table Enrichments:

Bring in and take apart an old smoke alarm, for children to explore the insides.

### Science Concepts/Activities:

- Make a fire extinguisher pails. Place baking soda in a coffee can. Make labels. This is an effective way to put out a grease fire, when placed by stove.
- Supervising constantly, light a candle then place a glass over it. Talk about how a fire needs air. Discuss fire safety. Encourage questions, discussion.

### Prop Box Ideas/Dramatic Play Enrichments:

#### **"FIREFIGHTER"** props:

Yellow rubber raincoats	boots	old vacuum hose
phone	whistle	fire hats
stepladder	flashlight	fire safety posters
walkie-talkies	gloves	baby dolls (to rescue)

### Movement and Motor:



- Teach and practice: **Stop, Drop and Roll!** Place a balloon or red piece of tissue paper or felt on their back. They should continue until the balloon pops, or the piece of paper or felt works its way off of their back.
- Talk about and let children practice crawling on the floor. (*Talk again about how if there is a fire, crawling near the ground helps you breath less smoke.*)
- Bring in a step ladder. (*Hold children's hands as they climb on it*)
- Obstacle course (*Pretend to be firefighters getting to a fire*)

### Playground/Walk Activities:

- Locate fire hydrants on your next walk. Discuss again what they are used for.

### Transition/Waiting Ideas:

- "What can you see that begins with the letter 'F'?"
- "If you are wearing *red* you may..."
- "Who can tell me where a fire extinguisher is in our school?... An exit?"
- "Who knows what kinds of things children shouldn't touch or play with?"
- "Who can name a tool a fire fighter uses?"
- "Billy – you may *crawl* over to ...."



### Block Area Enrichments:

Encourage children to "build" a city and a fire station. Add toy ~~cars~~, ambulances, "hoses", craft stick ladders, etc; Add tissue paper cut-outs of "flames"

**Flannel Board:**

Make/add: “flame” shapes, firefighter hats, a “hose”, fire truck, a building, etc...

**Teacher Made Enrichment Ideas:**

- Make squishy bags with a blob of thick red paint and a blob of thick yellow paint. Seal shut. Children can “mix” colors together by manipulating.
- Make a ‘Letter Box’ by collecting small trinkets and objects, beginning with the letter “F”, for the children to explore.
- Make a rebus chart for the fire truck snack activity, so that children can follow ‘directions’ and experience using a recipe, reinforcing the concept that symbols have meaning.
- Make a “fire extinguisher” by taking a 2-liter soda bottle and covering it with red construction paper and red electrical tape. Make a “warning label” for the front. Take a paper towel roll and cut a hole in it, to go over the top of the bottle. Paint the tube silver or black, and attach to the bottle by putting the neck of the bottle through the hole, and screwing the lid back on (to secure it.)

**Field Trip Ideas:**

- Arrange for the fire department to come in to talk to the children, and show the children the fire truck; **Or** - *Set up a visit to the Fire Station*

**Supplemental Ideas/Activities:** *(Teacher secures materials – not on supply list)*

- Have older children draw a rough “floor plan” of their house, and how they would get out of the house in an emergency. Make “Exit” signs.
- Make some pretend phone dial pads to review dialing “9-1-1”
- Practice the monthly fire drill at the center
- Draw a house outline in permanent marker on a dry erase board. Let children use dry erase markers (in fire colors) over the house, then erase “flames”.
- Make your puppet theatre look like a “window” Add flames. Children can then act out fire safety and save or escape with the puppets.
- Many insurance agents from the larger companies have materials on fire prevention. The Red Cross also has a fire safety program.
- Make a “Fire Truck” with a large box (or a copy paper box) Children can paint it red. Paint paper plates black for wheels and a steering wheel. Cover paper plates with foil to make “headlights” Add a “hose” (vacuum hose, etc)
- Bring in old telephones to practice calling 9-1-1; *Learn or review addresses*
- Make red, yellow and red jello with the children. Let children spray whipped crème on the top (like a fire extinguisher)
- Write a class thank you to the fire department, if they visit the center
- Color Mixing - red and yellow. *(Colored water, eyedroppers)*
- Put masking tape on the floor in the shape of a ladder. Encourage children to walk/balance on only the rung parts of the ladder.
- Let children glue together craft sticks to make ladders.
- Dalmatian Spots! Cut out several dog shapes. Have children roll a dice and place that number of black pom poms onto their Dalmatian.
- Make a 3D display board illustrating what children have learned/did this week
- Make a list with the children of words that rhyme with “fire”
- Make a fire hose/fire truck matching file folder game



### Supplies needed for activities/projects:

- Construction paper, paint and crayons
- Glue
- Red food coloring (or dry tempera)
- Playdough ingredients (flour, salt, oil)
- Lg sheets of easel paper (dictation, graphing)
- Felt for flannelboard
- Index cards
- Baking soda
- Legal size envelopes
- Stamp pads
- Craft sticks
- Yellow and Orange Highlighter pens



### **Non-Hardening No Cook Playdough**

2 cups self-rising flour  
1 T. Alum (optional)  
2 T. Salt  
2 T. cooking oil  
1 cup + 2 T. boiling water

*Mix and knead. (Due to boiling water, cannot be made with the children present)*

**Teach children how to roll into “hoses”**

### **Bulletin Board Ideas:**

*“Staying Safe!”*  
*“Helping Spot Fire Safety”*  
(with Dalmatian pics)  
*“No Safe Match”*  
*“Be Safe!”*  
*“Stop, Drop, and Roll”*  
*“Learning Matches”*  
*“Kids and Fire –*  
*Not a Good Match”*

### **Easy Playdough**

2 cups flour  
1 cup salt  
red tempera paint  
water

*Mix flour, salt and color with enough water to make desired consistency.*

**Let children make/place red playdough ‘flames’ onto a plastic dollhouse (designated for that)**



Firefighter Filefolder game: (free – just print off-line)

[www.preschoolprintables.com/filefolder/firesafety/filefolderfire.shtml](http://www.preschoolprintables.com/filefolder/firesafety/filefolderfire.shtml)

*As a group, review these concepts throughout the week:*

**Rules to Prevent Fires:**

1. **Never** play with matches!
2. **Never** play with lighters!
3. Never touch a hot burner!
4. Check smoke detectors regularly!



**Things to Do in Case of a Fire:**

1. What do you do, if your clothes are on fire?  
"Stop, Drop, & Roll".
2. Fire breaks out? Tell others by shouting  
"Fire!" or sounding an alarm.
3. Smell smoke? Drop down and quickly crawl  
to an exit; Then...
4. Go to the first door! Open only if it is not hot!
5. Follow your best escape route as quickly as  
possible. Meet other family members outdoors.
6. Call **9-1-1** from a neighbor's house.





# Songs/Fingerplays on Fire Safety



## Firefighter

I'm a little firefighter on the go  
Here is my helmet; here is my hose  
When I see a fire hear me shout  
Turn on the water and put the fire out

## 911 Song

I know a number that is really hot,  
It's only for people in a hot, hot spot.  
If you see a fire, if you see a crime,  
The number is the same every single time.  
This very special number is never for fun.  
This very special number is 911.

## Stop, Drop, and Roll

What do you do when your clothes catch fire?  
Three simple steps to put out that fire  
Stop! where you are, don't run, no don't run  
Drop! To the ground, and roll all around.  
What do you do when your clothes catches fire?  
Three simple steps to put out the fire

## Fire, Fire

Fire, fire, fire, fire, hear the siren blowing!  
Fire, fire fire, fire everybody's going!  
Climb the ladder, squirt the hose,  
With a shh, shh. shh, shh, out the fire goes!



## 9-1-1

*Tune: "Frere Jacques"*

There's a fire!  
There's a fire!  
9-1-1!  
9-1-1!  
Call the fire department!  
9-1-1!  
9-1-1!

## "I Found Matches!"

*Tune: "Skip to my Lou"*

I found [matches] what do I do?  
I found [matches] what do I do?  
I found [matches] what do I do?  
Tell me what to do!



Give them to a grown-up that's what I'll do!  
Give them to a grown-up that's what I'll do!  
Give them to a grown-up that's what I'll do!  
Give them to a grown-up!

*\*replace matches with lighter (2nd verse)*

## Firefighter

*Tune: Frere Jacques*

Firefighter, Firefighter  
You are brave, You are brave.  
Putting out the fires, putting out the fires,  
Lives you save, Lives you save.



## **Fire Truck Song**

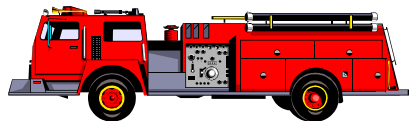
Hurry, hurry drive that fire truck,  
Hurry, hurry drive that fire truck,  
Hurry, hurry drive that fire truck,  
Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding

Hurry, hurry ring the bell  
Hurry, hurry ring the bell  
Hurry, hurry ring the bell  
Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding

Hurry, hurry turn the corner  
Hurry, hurry turn the corner  
Hurry, hurry turn the corner  
Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding

Hurry, hurry climb the ladder  
Hurry, hurry climb the ladder  
Hurry, hurry climb the ladder  
Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding

Hurry, hurry squirt the hoses  
Hurry, hurry squirt the hoses  
Hurry, hurry squirt the hoses  
Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding



## **Books:**

Fire Fighter! *by Angela Royston*  
The Fire Station *by Robert Munsch*  
Firehouse Dog *by Amy and Richard Hutchings*  
A Trip to the Firehouse *by Wendy C. Lewison*  
All Aboard Fire Trucks *by Teddy Slater*  
The Fire Engine Book *by Jesse Younger*  
Fire Truck to the Rescue *by Ann Martin*  
Working Hard w/ the Busy Fire Truck *J. Horowitz*  
Fire Drill! *A First-Start Easy Reader*  
My Dad's Fire Truck *Meredith Costain*  
Eye Witness Readers: Fire Fighter!

## **Fire Engine**

This is the fire engine, this is the hose,  
the firemen work fast, when the sire blows.

Up goes the ladder, Up goes the hose.  
The fire is out, When the siren blows.

## **Fire Truck Song**

*Tune: "Pop Goes the Weasel"*

Down the street the engine goes  
The firemen fight the fire  
Up the ladder with the hose  
Out goes the fire!

## **Fire Fighter, Fire Fighter**

Fire fighter, fire fighter  
Hear the alarm  
Save the building,  
from any harm.  
Fire fighter, firefighter  
No time to rest  
Wake up; wake up  
Do your best

## **Videos:**

Kid Safe  
All About Big Red Fire Engines  
I Wanna Be a Firefighter  
There Goes a Fire truck  
Firefighter George & Fire Safety

*Local Allstate Insurance agents  
also have a fire safety video to lend*

## **Fire Rap**



If your clothes catch on fire,  
Don't run or hop.  
The thing you have to do  
Is come to a stop.  
Then drop to the ground,  
The floor, the dirt.  
Don't worry 'bout the mess-  
Keep from getting hurt.  
When you're down  
Put your hands right over your face,  
Then roll like a log all over the place-  
To the left, to the right,  
Till the flame is out.  
And whenever you can, give a big shout!  
It might be mighty-mighty scary,  
But keep in control,  
You'll start being better  
When you stop, drop, and roll!



## **Five Little Firefighters**

Five little firefighters all in a row,  
One, two, three, four, five they go!  
Hop on the engine with a shout,  
Quicker than a wink, the fire is out!

## **Forest Fires**

Someone saw a little fire  
As he was passing by.  
He didn't stop to put it out;  
He didn't even try.  
He had not started it, of course;  
He had no time to spare;  
That it might start a forest fire  
He didn't even care!

## **Firefighter**

*(Tune: Itsy Bitsy Spider)*

The firefighter helps us learn  
our safety rules.  
Playing with matches is only for fools.  
If you see a fire,  
"help, you'll scream and shout!"  
Dial 911.  
The firefighter will put it out!

### **Five Little Firefighters**

Five little firefighters  
Sleeping in a row.  
RING goes the bell!  
Down the pole they go.  
They jump on the engine,  
And put out the fire.  
Now they're back home-  
My, but they are tired!



### **Four Busy Firefighters**

Four busy firefighters could not retire  
Because they might have to put out a fire.  
The first one rang a big brass bell.  
The second one said, 'It's the Grand Hotel!'  
The third one said, 'Down the pole we'll slide.'  
The fourth one said, 'Get ready to ride.'  
The siren said, 'Get out of the way!'  
We have to put out a fire today!  
The red fire truck sped on to the fire,  
As the big yellow flames grew higher and higher.  
Swish, went the water from the fire-hose spout  
And in no time at all the fire was out.

### **Fire Can Be Helpful**

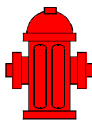
Fire can be helpful  
When handled with care.  
But fire and children  
Do not make a pair!  
So don't play with matches  
Or anything hot.  
Adults may use fire,  
But children should not!

*by Pauline C. Peck*

### **Smoke Chant**

If you don't want to choke,  
Crawl under the smoke.  
Get down on the floor  
And head for the door!





### Fire Action Poem

Come let us ride the firetruck,  
The firetruck, the firetruck.  
Oh! we can ride the firetruck  
Whoo! ooo! ooo!  
*(Children place hands on next one's  
shoulders making a long firetruck,  
and the first one is the driver)*

And now we use the fire hose,  
The fire hose, the fire hose.  
And now we use the fire hose,  
Use it so.  
*(Children pretend to fasten the hose  
to hydrant and spray water on fire)*

Come let us climb the ladders,  
The ladders, the ladders,  
Come let us climb the ladders,  
Up we go!  
*(Children pretend to climb ladders)*

Oh! hear our axes chopping,  
Chopping, chopping,  
Oh! hear our axes chopping,  
Heave! Hi! Ho!  
*(Children pretend to chop with axes)*

And now the fire is over,  
Is over, is over.  
And now the fire is over.  
Home we go.  
*(Children pretend they are putting fire  
equipment on trucks.)*

Now, home we ride the firetruck,  
The firetruck, the firetruck,  
Now, home we ride the firetruck,  
Talley-ho!!  
*(Children place hands on next one's  
shoulders making a long firetruck,  
and first one is the driver.)*

### The Fire Truck

The big red fire truck rushes down the street.  
"Clang clang clang" goes the bell,  
*(Make bell and siren noises)*  
The cars move to clear the way.  
The children run and yell.  
*(Run and yell)*  
The fire fighters roll out the heavy hose.  
*(Pretend to roll out hose)*  
They put up the ladders with a bang.  
*(Pretend to climb ladders)*  
They fight the fire and then start back.  
And the bell goes "clang clang clang."  
*(Make soft, slow bell noises that fade out)*

### Down by the Station

Down by the station early in the morning  
See the great big fire trucks all in a row.  
Hear the jangly fire bell  
sound a loud alarm now---  
Chug chug, clang clang, Off we go!



## **Do You Know What to Do in a Fire?**

*(Tune: "Billy Boy")*

Do you know what to do in a fire, in a fire?  
Do you know what to do in a fire?  
Yes, I know what to do;  
We've rehearsed it through and through,  
Yes, I know what to do in case of fire.

Have you planned your escape in a fire, in a fire?  
Have you planned your escape in a fire?  
Yes, we've planned our escape;  
We know just what routes to take,  
Yes, we've planned our escape in a fire.

Do you know you should crawl through the  
smoke, through the smoke?  
Do you know you should crawl through the  
smoke?  
We'll stay close to the floor  
'Cause there's air all the more,  
When there's smoke we'll stay close to the floor.

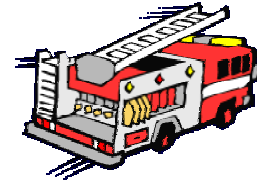
Do you know what to do if your clothes catch on fire?  
Do you know what to do if on fire?  
Yes, I'll stop, drop and roll  
That's the best way I've been told  
To put out clothing if it is on fire.

## **Old MacDonald**

Old Macdonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O  
And on this farm he had some woods, E-I-E-I-O  
with a chop-chop-here, and a chop-chop-there  
Here a chop, there a chop, everywhere a chop-chop  
Old Macdonald had some woods, E--I--E--I--O....

Then Old Macdonald lit a match, E-I-E-I-O  
And he was careless burning trash, E-I-E-I-O  
With a spark-spark here, and a spark-spark there  
Here a spark, there a spark, everywhere a spark-spark  
Old Macdonald burned his woods, E--I--E--I--O....

Through carelessness, he burned his woods, E-I-E-I-O  
Now Old Macdonald has no woods, E--I--E--I--O



## **Ten Brave Firefighters**

Ten brave firefighters sleeping in a row.  
*(Fingers curled to make sleeping men)*  
Ding, dong, goes the bell  
*(Pull down on the bell cord)*  
And down the pole they go.  
*(With fists together slide down the pole)*  
Off on the engine, oh, oh, oh!  
*(Steering the fire engine very fast)*  
Using the big hose, so, so, so.  
*(Make a nozzle with fist to use hose)*  
When all the fire's out, home so slow.  
Back to bed, all in a row.  
*(Curl all fingers again for sleeping men)*

Fire safety is the rule.  
Matches are not for play.  
This is what I learned in school -  
Practice fire safety every day!



## **I'm a Big Red Fire Truck**

I'm a big red fire truck long and stout,  
When I am needed, I roar and shout.  
People love to see me rush about,  
Just turn me on and head me out.

I'm a big red fire truck stout and long,  
Here's is my laddler, tall and strong.  
When I get a call, you'll hear my song,  
Just climb aboard and turn me on.

## **Get Out Quick!**

*Tune: BINGO*

What happens if there is a fire ?  
Do you know what to do ? Oh !  
GET OUT ! QUICK , GET OUT !  
get out ! Quick ,get out !  
get out ! QUICK, get out !  
Stay very low and go. GO !

What happens if there is a fire ?  
Do you know what to do ? Oh!  
STAY OUT ! DON'T GO BACK !  
stay out ! Don't go back !  
stay out ! Don't go back !  
Don't go back in the house. No !

What happens if there is a fire?  
Do you know what to do ? Oh !  
GET HELP ! CALL FOR HELP !  
get help ! call for help !  
get help ! call for help !  
call 911 for help ! oh!

## **Firefighter, Firefighter**

Firefighter, firefighter,  
Hear the alarm.  
Save the building  
From any harm.

Firefighter, firefighter,  
No time to rest.  
Wake up, wake up!  
Do your best!

## **9-1-1 SONG**

*Tune "I'm a Little Teapot"*

I'm a big red fire truck long and stout,  
When I am needed, I roar and shout.  
When there is a fire call 9-1-1,  
I get the call and I'm on the run.  
I'm a big red fire truck stout and long,  
Here's is my ladder, tall and strong.  
Run to a neighbor and call 9-1-1,  
I'll come help you on the run.



# Fire Fighter

### Creative Dramatic Activity

***FACILITATOR:***

Everything is quiet. The fire truck is ready to go in case there's a fire. The fire fighters are asleep at the station.

(Sound effect: Snores)

Suddenly the fire alarm rings!

(Sound effect: *briiiiinnnnnnngggggg*)

The fire fighters jump out of bed and run to the truck!

(Sound effect: stamp, stamp, stamp of feet)

The truck races away to the fire!

*(Sound effect: vroooooom, vroooooom)*

The siren wails all the way.

(Sound effect: ooooooh ooooooh ooooooh of siren)

When they reach the fire, the truck screeches to a stop.

*(Sound effect: tires screeching)*

The fire fighters run to the fire.

*(Make patter noise by slapping on legs)*

The fire fighters spray water on the fire!

(Sound effect: hisssssssssssss)

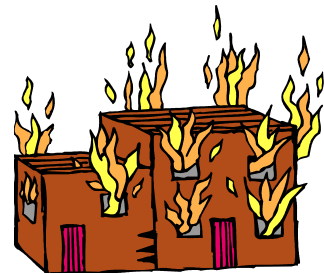
At last the fire is out. The fire fighters are tired!

*(Sound effect: yawns)*

**They climb on the truck and drive back to the station!**

*(Sound effect: vroooooooooom)*

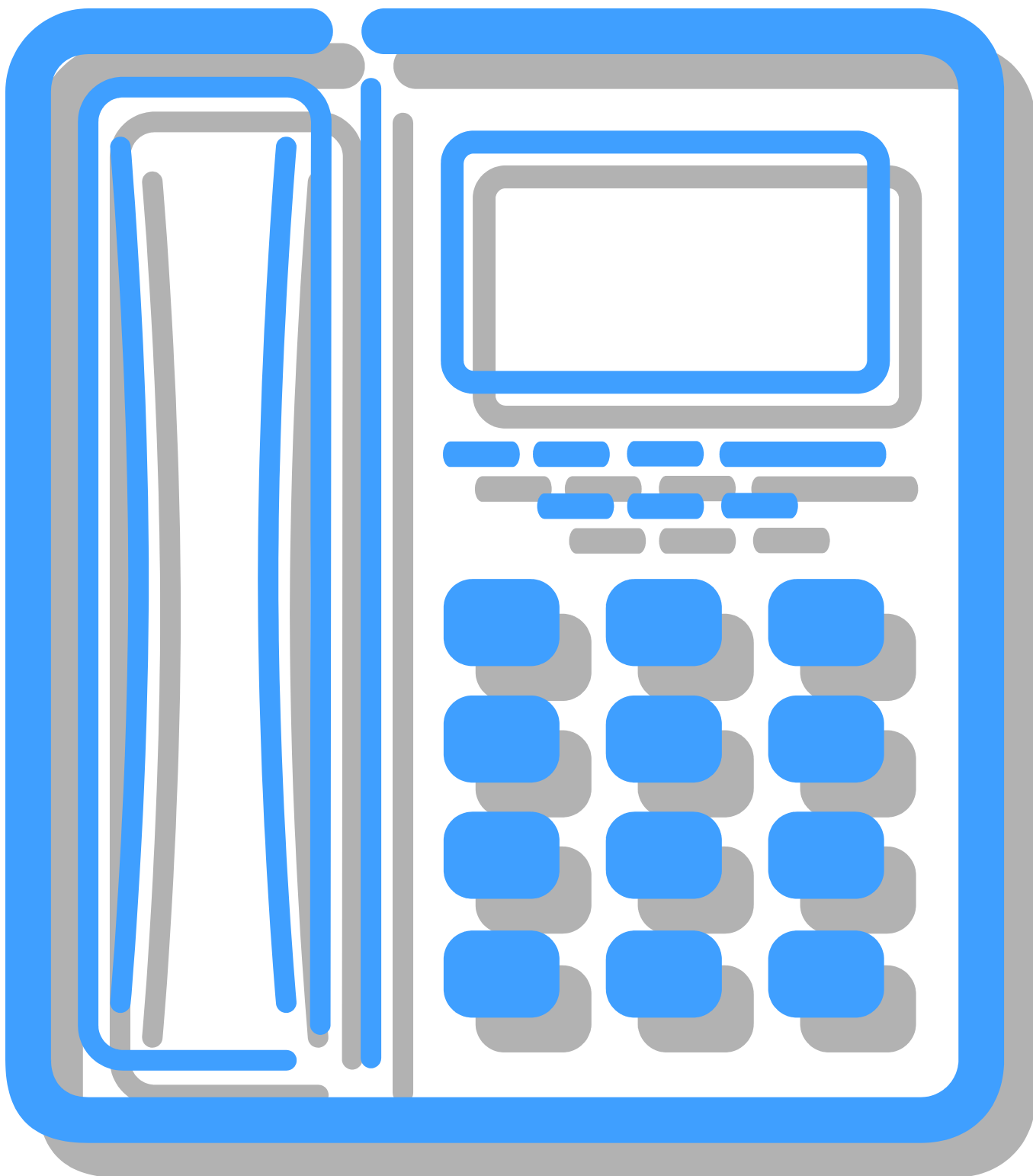
They put away the truck. Everything is quiet. The fire truck and the fire fighters are ready for the next fire!



**Note:** Add to this script, ad-lib, elaborate, act out, and involve children!! Also use your voice as a tool when relaying the story events. Ham it up!! Have fun!

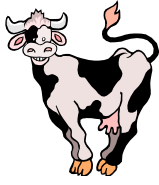
## MAKE A FIRETRUCK CAKE!

Bake or purchase a plain loaf cake. Mix several drops of red food coloring into vanilla frosting. Cover the entire cake with the frosting. Use square cookies to represent windows on the front and sides of the cake. Add four chocolate sandwich cookies on the bottom corners to represent wheels. Add pretzel sticks for a ladder, strips of licorice for fire hoses, and a red gumdrop on the top for the siren or flashing light!



***Print numbers on this picture of a “phone” and have children practice dialing 9-1-1. Better yet – practice on a real phone (that is not connected.)  
Remind children – only use 911 in a real emergency.***





# The Cow That Nearly Destroyed Chicago

*Or: "Why We Celebrate National Fire Prevention Week"*



On October 8, 1871, a major disaster changed a lot of people's lives and taught us a lot about fire safety. The disaster left 900,000 people homeless, killed 300 people, and destroyed more than 2,000 acres -- or about 3-1/2 square miles -- of land in the center of Chicago. That was a lot of the city back then!

That disaster was called the Great Chicago Fire. It was one of the most destructive fires ever seen in the United States. Each year, we remember the Great Chicago Fire by calling the week of October 8 National Fire Prevention Week. We want to learn from that!

What started the fire that caused such major destruction? No one knows for sure, but this is what many people think happened that day:

Back in October 1871 -- that's over 130 years ago now -- Chicago was just beginning to grow into the big city that it is today. In the ten years before that, the city's population had tripled in size. One Chicago family, the O'Leary family, lived in a small wooden cottage. Behind their house was a barn where they kept cows and other animals.

On Sunday night between 8:30 and 9:00 p.m., Mrs. O'Leary went out to the barn. No one is sure exactly why she went. Some people say she went to check on a sick cow. Others say she went to get fresh milk. She brought a kerosene lamp with her, which she placed on the floor of the barn. The cow kicked it over and set the wooden boards of the barn on fire. The flames spread quickly.

A neighbor pulled the nearest alarm, which was 3-1/2 blocks away, but it was broken. Meanwhile Mr. O'Leary and other neighbors tried to put out the fire themselves but they could not. The fire spread and soon the hay in the loft was in flames. A fire watchman who was in the tower of the Courthouse saw the flames and guessed where the fire was. Unfortunately, he was wrong and all but one of the fire engines went to the wrong location. This was before phones and before people could call "911."

Because most of the buildings were made of wood then and everything was dry because it hadn't rained, the fire spread from building to building quickly. Firefighters from as far away as New York were called upon to help put out the flames. But the fire continued to burn until almost midnight on Monday, more than a day (24 hours!) after the fire began. Then it began to rain. That helped the already tired firefighters get the fire under control!



## Listening Skill Building/Recall

Read aloud the brief story **The Cow That Destroyed Chicago**. When you've finished reading the story, ask questions like the ones below to develop and test the children's listening comprehension and skills. (*Note: For younger children, you might read the story in two parts and simplify questions*)



- In what city did this story take place? (*Chicago*)
- What was the O'Leary's house made of? (*wood*)
- When Mrs. O'Leary went out to the barn, what did she carry with her? Why?
- How do many people think the fire started? (*They think Mrs. O'Leary's cow kicked over the lantern.*)
- Why did the fire spread so quickly? (*Everything was very dry because it hadn't rained much.*)
- How long did it take to stop the fire? (*over a day...more than 24 hours; from about 9:00 p.m. Sunday until almost midnight Monday*)
- What finally happened to help firefighters get the fire under control? (*It started to rain.*)
- What things are different today to help us so this wouldn't happen? (*telephones, fire hydrants, the 911 system, smoke detectors, faster transportation, etc*)

*From: the NFPA*

### On-line Resources

[www.preschoolprintables.com/filefolders/firesafety/filefolderfire.shtml](http://www.preschoolprintables.com/filefolders/firesafety/filefolderfire.shtml) (printable file folder game)

[www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org) (printable Weekly Reader unit)

[www.SmokeyBear.com](http://www.SmokeyBear.com)

[www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov) (free Sesame Street fire education kit for teachers)

**With prior approval,** and after a “Don’t-try-this-at-home” talk with the children...

*Demonstrate how a battery operated fire alarm works by holding a lighter close to it. Discuss.*

Note: Use caution – you do not want to trigger sprinklers or have the fire department respond.

# Fire Safety Quiz:

1. When you make your fire escape plan, how many ways out of your house should you include?

- ☐ The easiest way out.
- ☐ One Way Out
- ☐ At least Two Ways Out

*Note:*

*Prior to reading the answer choices, use as an open question to assess knowledge and encourage discussion.*

2. If you smell smoke, you should:

- ☐ Check any doors for heat with the back of your hand before opening it.
- ☐ Open the door right away and run out.
- ☐ Ignore the smell. It's probably nothing.

3. If your clothes catch on fire, you should:

- ☐ Look up the emergency number in the phone book.
- ☐ Stop, Drop, and Roll covering your face.
- ☐ Try to get your clothes off

4. How often should you clean and check your smoke detector?

- ☐ Once a week.
- ☐ Once a year.
- ☐ When you remember

5. In case of fire or other emergencies, what phone number should you call?

- ☐ 411
- ☐ 911
- ☐ Your neighbor



6. If you wake up hearing the smoke detector alarm or smelling smoke, you should:

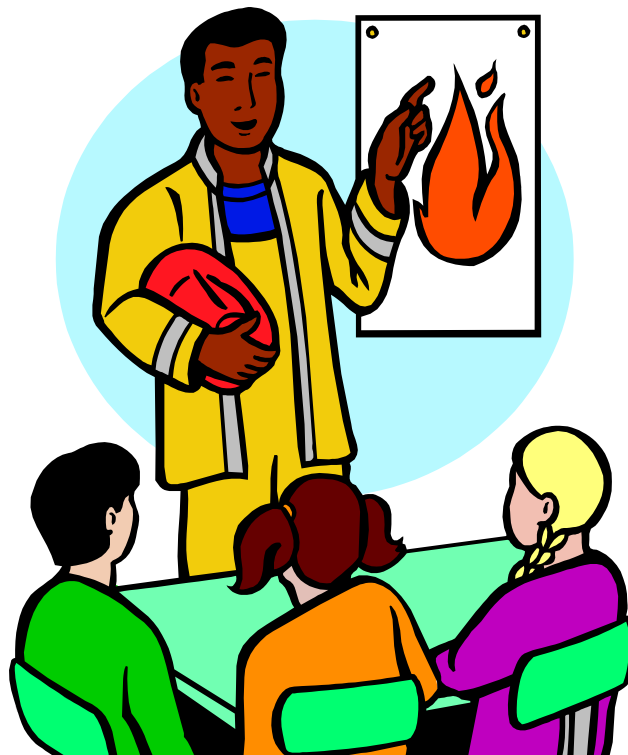
- ☐ Get down low and crawl across the floor to a safe exit.
- ☐ Jump up and run.
- ☐ Go back to sleep. It's probably a false alarm.

7. If you call 911 for an emergency, you should know:

- ☐ What time it is .
- ☐ The name of the people that need help
- ☐ The address where the emergency is.

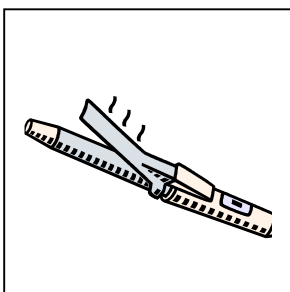
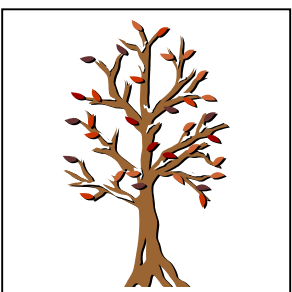
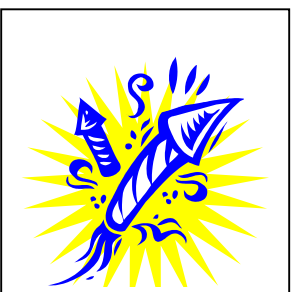
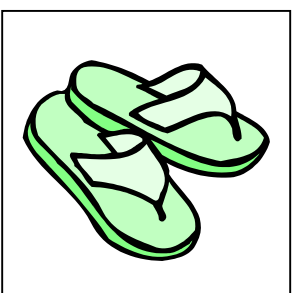
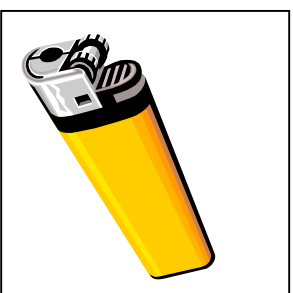
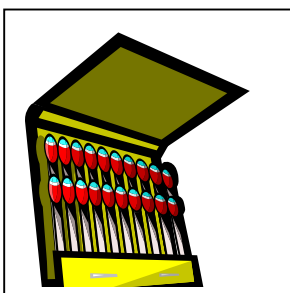
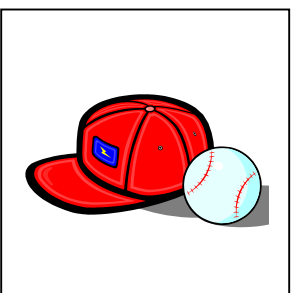
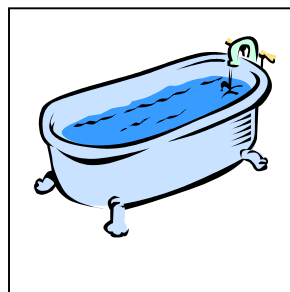
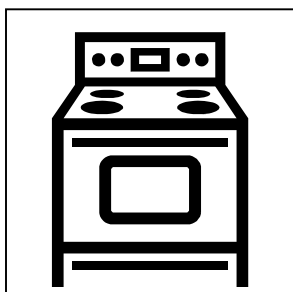
8. If you find a lighter or matches, you should:

- ☐ See if they work and try to light them.
- ☐ Give them to a grown up you know right away.
- ☐ Start a collection



# Hot or Not? – Do Not Touch

Cut out pictures and glue onto index cards. Cover with contact paper or laminate. **To Do Activity**: Children sort/classify the things based on what things are safe for them to touch, and what things they should not touch.



Dear Families,

We are studying fire safety in our classroom. This is an important topic to discuss with your child(ren), as even a small fire can become fierce quickly... and be deadly. Help keep your family safe and sound in the event of a fire by teaching your children what to do. These basic, time-tested fire safety tips have simple slogans to help remember them.



**TWO WAYS OUT** Find two ways out of every room. If the door is blocked by fire or smoke, you may have to use the window as a second exit from a room. Talk about this with your children. Escape from a second floor may necessitate the use of a fire safety ladder. Under your supervision, help your child practice using the safety ladder from the first floor. Let children go into each room with you and figure out 2 exits instead of just telling them, so that they fully learn the process involved themselves.



**BE A DETECTOR INSPECTOR** Make sure you have a smoke detector installed on every level of your home, especially near sleeping areas. Let your child help test the smoke detectors once a month to make sure that they are still working. Pick a specific date to change your smoke detector battery – for example, your child's birthday or in the fall or spring when the time changes. Let your child hear the alarm on the smoke detector so she will recognize the sound and know that it means to get out of the house right away. Do not ever give children the message that it is okay to take the batteries out of a smoke detector to use in something else.



**IF ITS HOT, BETTER NOT** If you smell smoke, or you know there is a fire, before opening a door, touch the door with the palm of your hand. If the door or the knob is hot, don't open the door. The door will be hot if fire is on the other side. Go quickly to your second exit and carefully leave the room in another way.



**SMOKE SHOW, GET DOWN LOW** Smoke is one of the greatest dangers in a burning building. Since smoke rises, the air near the floor is safer to breathe. Explain that when there is smoke in the air, its important to keep low and crawl toward the exit of the building. To practice this important rule, have some family members hold a bed sheet a few feet above the floor to represent smoke while someone crawls under it. You do it too so children can see how important it is.



**NEVER HIDE, GO OUTSIDE** Teach your child this important rule. Help him understand that if there is a fire or if the smoke alarm goes off, his job is to get out of the house as quickly as possible. Remind your child that it's dangerous to hide in a closet or under the bed because you or the firefighter might not be able to find him when the room is filled with smoke. Have your child repeat the rule back to you and explain why in their own words, to see if they fully understand this concept.



**ALWAYS RACE TO THE MEETING PLACE** Before there is a fire in your home, choose a place for everyone to meet to make sure all of the family members have gotten out safely. You might decide to meet at a certain tree in the yard, on the sidewalk under a streetlight, or next to the swing set. Once everyone knows the meeting place, practice gathering there to make sure everyone understands where to meet. Remind your child to stay outside if there is a fire in your home – **and wait** at the meeting place.



**ONCE OUT, STAY OUT** Never go back into a burning building once you've left it. Remind your children to always remain outside at the designated meeting place. Don't go back for anything! Let the firefighters get pets out.



**KEEP A LIGHTER, LOCKED UP TIGHTER** Keep matches and lighters (cigarette lighters and barbeque grill lighters) in a locked cabinet or drawer. Active, curious children can easily climb to what is thought to be "an out of reach" place – and often do. Don't forget about emergency or souvenir matchbooks.



**THE HELP NUMBER, 911** Teach your child about 911 or keep the fire department's emergency phone number near the phone.



**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT** Practice your evacuation plan with your family at least twice a year—at least once time at night. Make an event of it. Be matter-of-fact with children... stress the importance of knowing fire plans to keep them safe – without paralyzing them with unnecessary fear.

Thank you for your assistance with such an important topic.

Signed,

Your Child's Teacher

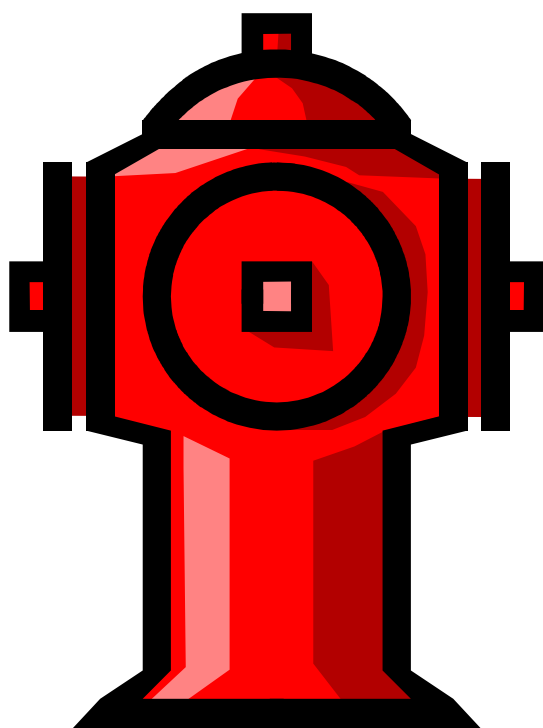
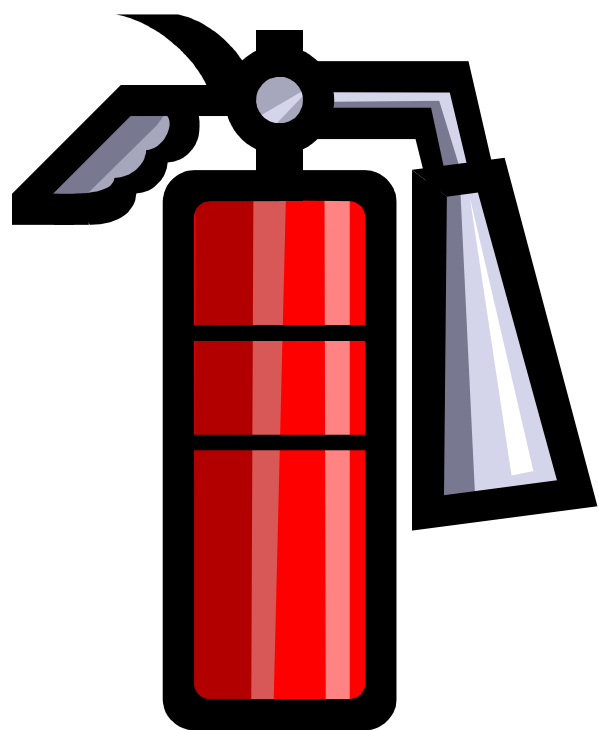
Patterns to make flannelboard pieces:



*How to use these as patterns:*

*Cut out 'objects.' Trace onto a hard stock paper (or a file folder.) Cut out, and use as stencils for math games, flannel board pieces and lacing cards. Can also cut into pieces to make "puzzles." (These are not for coloring pages.) **Or** - Laminate or cover with contact paper. Glue magnets onto the back and use on a magnetic board or cookie sheet.*







Jack be nimble  
But he's not too slick!  
Jack jumped over a candle stick!

# Fire Drill !!!!!

*By Cathy Abraham*

We were all inside  
Playing together well  
When all of a sudden...  
WE HEARD A LOUD BELL!!!

It was loud. It was shrill.  
“Line up!” said our teacher.  
“IT’S A FIRE DRILL!”

“Leave your toys. Leave your games.  
Line up right away.  
Don’t get coats or bookbags -  
Everything stays.”

In a line we walked  
Together to the grass.  
Everyone was outside -  
Every other class.

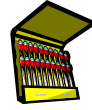
This was practice  
To be safe if we need to.  
If there is a fire  
We’ll know what to do!



**Safe**



**Unsafe**





childcarediva©

Ok, ok, ok... a little about “me.”

I have worked in this field for 25 years, in various capacities – teacher, director, college instructor, CDA Advisor/Rep, NAEYC Validator, and have also served in the capacity of “Director of Training/Curriculum” for 2 national for-profit chains. I am currently doing consulting and training.

I feel so fortunate to be able to do meaningful work that I love!

*Apologies for unknown/uncredited sources. These ideas have been collected throughout my 25 years in the field, and in my work along side of some wonderful early childhood professionals. If you are aware of the origin of anything included, please contact me so proper credit can be given. Any oversights are unintentional.*

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[www.childcarelounge.com](http://www.childcarelounge.com)